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ABSTRACT

This 44-item bibliography, limited to the television era of American politics, is intended to assist teachers of debate, argumentation, and political communication; researchers of campaign debates; and debate sponsors and participants. Scholarly books and monographs; public affairs books, monographs and papers; academic articles and chapters from textbooks; and sources for debate transcripts and video-tapes are listed. (RAE)

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Political Campaign Debating

A Selected, Annotated Bibliography Prepared by
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Second edition, August 1988

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TV debates have become a regular feature of the media politics by which candidates seek office. This bibliography, limited to the TV era of American politics, is intended to assist teachers of debate, argumentation, and political communication; researchers of campaign debates; and debate sponsors and participants.

Scholarly Books and Monographs

Bishop, George, Robert G. Meadow, and Marilyn Jackson-Beeck, eds. The Presidential Debates: Media, Electoral, and Policy Perspectives. New York: Praeger, 1978. Primarily concerned with the 1976 debates, with some attention on the 1960 debates. Includes 10 scholarly essays, most measuring the effects of the 1976 debates.

Bitzer, Lloyd and Theodore Rueter. Carter vs. Ford: The Counterfeit Debates of 1976. Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1980. A textual analysis of argumentation, with an extensive critique of the debate format, and suggestions for improving the format.

Jamieson, Kathleen H. and David Birdsell. Presidential Debates: The Challenge of Creating an Informed Electorate. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, forthcoming (Fall 1988). Surveys the function of debate in American society from the nation's founding to contemporary presidential debates. Suggests changes in structure and content.

Kraus, Sidney, ed. The Great Debates: Background-Perspective-Effects. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1962. Incudes 14 academic studies and 5 reports from politicians and media representatives involved in the 1960 debates. Focuses on debate effects.

Kraus, Sidney, ed. The Great Debates: Carter vs. Ford, 1976. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1979. Includes 20 academic studies and 7 reports from journalists, politicians, and individuals in public affairs groups concerned with the debate effects and policy.

Kraus, Sidney. Televised Presidential Debates and Public Policy. Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, forthcoming (Summer 1988). Covers debates from 1960 to 1984, with emphasis on public policy as it relates to TV in politics, debate format negotiations, media coverage, and voter effects.

Martel, Myles. Political Campaign Debates: Images, Strategies, and Tactics. New York: Longman, 1983. Most comprehensive analysis of political debate strategy available. Covers all electoral levels. The author, a former speech communication professor, served as a debate advisor to Reagan in 1980.

Ritter, Kurt, ed. The 1980 Presidential Debates. Lawrence, KS: The Allen Press, 1981 (special issue of Speaker & Gavel, vol 18, no. 2.) Available from the Allen Press, P.O. Box 368, Lawrence, KS 66044. The only compilation of studies exclusively on the 1980 debates. Presents eight academic essays, including an "insider's" report from Ronald Reagan's debate advisor. Most attention given to debate content and format.

Public Affairs Books, Monographs, and Papers

Ranney, Austin, ed. The Past and Future of Presidential Debates. Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1979. Focuses on the value of presidential debates in public affairs. The most scholarly of the public affairs publications on campaign debates.

Swerdlow, Joel L. Beyond Debate: A Paper on Televised Presidential Debates. New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1984. An excellent survey (90 pages) of key issues in debate policy: formats, participation, and sponsorship.

Swerdlow, Joel L. Presidential Debates: 1988 and Beyond. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1988. Sponsored by the League of Women Voters Education Fund, these essays focus on sponsorship of televised campaign debates. Contributors are political scientists and strategists, media representatives and critics, communication scholars, and legal specialists. Includes data on radio and TV debates since 1948 and on Gallop Poll surveys from 1960 to 1987.

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Academic Articles and Chapters

Anderson, James A. and Robert K. Avery. "An Analysis of Changes in Voter Perception of Candidates' Positions," Communication Monographs 45 (1978), 354-361. Surveys of families after the 1976 presidential debates suggest that the debates reinforced voters' prior perceptions of candidates' positions on issues and voters' own positions on issues.

Berquist, Goodwin F. and James L. Golden. "Media Rhetoric, Criticism, and the Public Perception of the 1980 Presidential Debates", Quarterly Journal of Speech, 67 (1981), 125-137. Through six claims, the authors provide a composite view of the contributions of anchormen, editors, and reporters in giving meaning to the 1980 debates.

Blakenship, Jane, Marlene G. Fine, and Leslie K. Davis. "The 1980 Republican Primary Debates: The Transformation of Actor to Scene," Quarterly Journal of Speech, 69 (1983), 25-36. Through an examination of five TV and one radio debate, the authors reveal how Reagan came to dominate the 1980 Republican presidential primary campaign.

Bryski, Bruce. G. "An Analysis of Evidence in the First Ford/Carter Debate," Journal of Applied Communication Research, 6 (1978), 19-30. Reports the quantity, accuracy and reliability of evidence used in the first 1976 debate; describes Carter's use of evidence as more effective and accurate.

Bowes, John E. and Herbert Strentz. "Candidate Images: Stereotyping and the 1976 Debates," Communication Yearbook II, ed. Brent D. Ruben, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1979, pp. 391-406. Examines the process of candidate image formation: the congruency between candidates' and voters' views on issues and in terms of stereotyping components (homogenizations, polarization, fixedness, and reification).

Chaffee, Steven H. "Approaches of U.S. Scholars to the Study of Televised Political Debates," Political Communication Review, 4 (1979) 19-33. Reviews political debate research (1960-76) on research questions pursued and generic approaches employed, particularly the traditional persuasive paradigm vs. the journalistic approach.

Chaffee, Steven H. "Presidential Debates-Are They Helpful to Voters?" Communication Monographs, 45 (1978), 330-346. Based on a variety of studies of the 1960 and 1976 debates, Chaffee concludes that debates have a high value in the political process.

Desmond, Roger Jon and Thomas R. Donahue. "The Role of the 1976 Televised Presidential Debates in the Political Socialization of Adolescents," Communication Quarterly, 29 (1981), 302-308. The social class of parents was the best predictor of how adolescents viewed the importance of the first 1976 debate. Interpersonal communication prior and immediately after the debate was the factor which best predicted the adolescents' perceptions of who won the debate.

Ellsworth, John H. "Rationality and Campaigning: A Content Analysis of the 1960 Presidential Campaign Debates," Western Political Science Quarterly, 18 (1965), 794-802. Compares the discourse in the 1960 debates with other campaign discourse in the 1960 election. Finds that in the debates the candidates devoted more time to making position statements, offering evidence for their positions, and giving reasoned arguments in support of their positions than they did in non-debate discourse.

Graber, Doris A. and Young Yun Kim. "Why John Q. Public Did Not Learn Much from the 1976 Presidential Debates," Communication Yearbook II, ed. Brent D. Ruben, New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1979, pp. 407-421. Concludes that the 1976 debates had a quite limited, but measurable impact on voter learning, particularly among those already knowledgeable about the candidates and the campaign prior to the debates. Discusses factors which limited voter learning from the debates.

Hellweg, Susan A. and Steven .. Phillips. "A Verbal and Visual Analysis of the 1980 Houston Republican Presidential Primary Debates," Southern Speech Communication Journal, 47 (1981), 23-28. Finds that Ronald Reagan and George Bush employed similar verbal communication in the final Republican primary debate in 1976. Reports that the format gave greater TV camera and speaking time to Reagan, but that Bush may have used his visual communication more effectively than Reagan.

Kennamer, J. David. "Debate Viewing and Debate Discussion as Predictors of Campaign Cognition," Journalism Quarterly, 64 (1987), 114-118. Based on data from over 300 Richmond, Va. residents who were interviewed shortly after the 1984 presidential and vice-presidential debates, this study concludes that interpersonal discussions of debates strengthen the impact of viewing debates: those who had conversations about them were able to name more campaign issues and express more political attitudes.

Kraus, Sidney and Dennis K. Davis. "Political Debates," Handbook of Political Communication, eds. Dan D. Nimmo and Keith Sanders, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Press, 1981, pp. 273-296. Reviews classical democratic theory and studies of the impact of TV debates. Argues for institutionalizing political debates.

Lemert, James B., William R. Elliot, Karl J. Nestvold, and Galen R. Rarick. "Effects of Viewing a Presidential Primary Debate," Communication Research, 10 (1983), 155-173. Based on data from viewers of the 1980 New Hampshire Republican primary TV debate, authors conclude that watching a TV debate early in the campaign increases voters' interest and increases their subsequent efforts to gain campaign information.

McCall, Jeffrey M. "The Panelists as Pseudo-Debaters: An Evaluation of the Questions and the Questioners in the Major Debates of 1980," Journal of the American Forensic Association, 21 (1984) 97-104. Based on analyses of the Reagan-Carter and Reagan-Anderson debates in 1980, the author recommends specific guidelines and questioning techniques to improve the effectiveness of the journalists serving as TV panelists.

Meadow, Robert G. "Televised Presidential Debates as Whistle Stop Speeches," Television Coverage of the 1980 Presidential Campaign, ed. William C. Adams, Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corp., 1983, pp. 89-112. Employs computer-assisted content analysis to reveal that many statements in the major 1980 presidential debates were stock campaign responses rather than spontaneous and original statements by Carter and Reagan.

Meadow, Robert G. and Marilyn Jackson-Beeck. "Candidate Political Philosophy: Revelations in the 1960 and 1976 Debates," Presidential Studies Quarterly, 10 (1980), 234-243. Identifies the political philosophies implicit in the candidates' statements in the 1960 and 1976 debates; notes that the administration of each president corresponded with the philosophy implicit in his debating as a candidate.

Messaris, Paul, Bruce Eckman, and Gary Gumpert. "Editing Structure in the Televised Versions of the 1976 Presidential Debates," Journal of Broadcasting, 23 (1979) 359-369. Examines the TV camera shots as a form of editing structure in the three Carter-Ford debates. Considers type, duration, and frequency of camera shots.

Pfau, Michael. "Criteria and Format to Optimize Political Debates: An Analysis of South Dakota's 'Election 80' Series,", Journal of the American Forensic Association, 19 (1983), 205-214. Describes the format for the 1980 South Dakota TV debates, illustrates how it conforms more closely to genuine debate than other TV formats, and provides data from candidates and news media participants evaluating the format.

Pfau, Michael. "A Comparative Assessment of Intra-party Political Debate Formats," Political Communication Review, 9 (1984), 1-23. Based on three televised presidental primary debates in 1984, this study found that when both debate procedure and format were altered, a significan difference was produced in the behaviors of debate moderators and candidates. Changes in debate format alone affected the quality of candidate answers as reflected in their directness and completeness.

Pfau, Michael. "The Influence of Intra-party Political Debates on Candidate Preference," Communication Research, 14 (1987), 687-697. Using the 1984 presidential campaign for analysis, this study demonstrated that (1) intra-party debates significantly influence viewer attitudes about the candidates and viewer interest in the campaign and (2) violations of viewer expectations about candidates offer an explanation for shifts in viewer attitudes and preferences.

Ritter, Kurt and Susan A. Hellweg. "Televised Presidential Primary Debates: A New National Forum for Political Debating," Journal of the American Forensic Association, 23 (1986), 1-14. Covers 31 presidential primary debates televised between 1956-1984. Analyzes the debates from four perspectives: historical development, political strategy, voter information, and influence of the television medium.

Rosenberg, William L. and William R. Elliott. "Effect of Debate Exposure on Evaluation of 1984 Vice-Presidential Candidates," Journalism Quarterly, 64 (1987), 55-64, 262. Based on a survey of over 300 Philadelphia voters, this study explores how voters' tendencies to employ selective exposure and reduction of cognitive dissonance operated against Geraldine Ferraro in her 1984 VP debate against George Bush. Concluded that the debate tended to help Ferraro with Democratic women but hurt her with Democratic men, and Republican men and women.

Rouner, Donna and Richard M. Perloff. "Selective Perception of Outcome of First 1984 Presidential Debate," Journalism Quarterly, 65 (1988), 141-47, 240. Using data from over 130 individuals in the Cleveland area, this study reinforces previous research by demonstrating that partisan voters believe that their favorite candidate won the debate. It also suggests that undecided voters are influenced by the TV debates .

Rowland, Robert. "The Substance of the 1980 Carter-Reagan Debate," Southern Speech Communication Journal, 51 (1986), 142-165. This careful textual and argumentative analysis reveals that the journalistic commentators were innaccurate in reporting that Carter was superior on the "substance" or "issues" in the 1980 debate, while Reagan won the TV audience due to his "style." Rowland's analysis makes it clear that Reagan was the superior debater in terms of substantive arguments.

Sigelman, Lee and Carol K. Sigelman. "Judgments of the Carter-Reagan Debate: The Eyes of the Beholders," Public Opinion Quarterly, 48 (1984), 624-628. Using data on over 800 registered voters from a CBS News/New York Times survey conducted shortly after the 1980 Reagan-Carter debate, this study lends support to the "minimum effects" position on TV debates. It reports that citizens who stated that they favored a particular candidate (and who stated that they intended to vote) tended to believe that their candidate had won the debate.

Tiemens, Robert K. "Television's Portrayal of the 1976 Presidential Debates: An Analysis of Visual Content," Communication Monographs, 45 (1978), 362-370. Provides a visual content analysis of the three 1976 debates, showing that Carter benefited more than Ford from the visual dimension of TV.

Tiemens, Robert K., Susan A. Hellweg, Philip Kipper, and Steven L. Phillips. "An Integrative Verbal and Visual Analysis of the Carter-Reagan Debate," Communication Quarterly, 33 (1985), 39-42. Combines verbal and visual content analyses of the 1980 Reagan-Carter debate, focusing on points of clash.

Trent, Judith S. and Robert V. Friedenberg. "Debates in Political Campaigns," Chapter 7 in Trent and Friedenberg's Political Campaign Communication: Principles and Practices, New York: Praeger, 1983, pp. 233-273. The best short overview of campaign debates. Provides an historical review of political debates, cites requisite conditions for debates to occur, outlines debating strategies of candidates, and summarizes the effects of TV debates.

Vancil, David L. and Sue D. Pendell. "Winning Presidential Debates: An Analysis of Criteria Influencing Audience Response," Western Journal of Speech Communication, 48 (1984), 62-74. Based on audience responses to the 1980 Reagan-Carter debates, the authors describe six criteria which influence audience judgments about who won a televised political debate.

Vancil, David L. and Sue D. Pendell. "The Myth of Viewer-Listener Disagreement in the First Kennedy-Nixon Debate," Central States Speech Journal, 38 (1987), 16-27. This thorough review of public opinion polls refutes the conventional wisdom from journalistic accounts of the 1960 Kennedy-Nixon debates that the TV audience viewed Nixon as the losing debater because of his TV image, while the radio audience, lacking negative visual clues, viewed Nixon as the winner.

Debate Transcripts and Video-Tapes

Transcripts of Presidential Debates: Transcripts of all four Kennedy-Nixon debates are in Kraus (1962), pp. 348-430 (see page 1 of this bib for citation). Transcripts of all three Carter-Ford debates and the single vice presidential debate (Mondale-Dole) are in Kraus (1979), pp. 453-541; Bishop (1978), pp 213-305; and Bitzer and Rueter (1980), pp. 253-391 (see page 1 of this bib for citations). Transcripts of all seven TV debates (including the five Republican primary debates) are presented in Transcripts of the 1980 Presidential Debates, ed. Theodore Rueter (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms International, 1982), a "printed on demand" publication. The 1984 vice presidential debate appeared in the New York Times 12 Oct. 1984, sec. B, pp. 4-5. The two 1984 Reagan-Mondale presidential debates are in Public Papers of the President—Ronald Reagan, 1984 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1987), Book II, pp. 1441-1462 and 1589-1608.

Video-Tapes of Televised Political Debates: The four 1960 Kennedy-Nixon debates are available from the Audio-Visual Dept., John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library, Columbia Point, Boston, MA 02125. The Vanderbilt University Television News Archive has the most extensive collection of political campaign debates available to scholars and teachers. Its holdings include: the three McGovern-Humphrey debates of the 1972 California Democratic primary campaign, all of the 1976 presidential and vice presidential debates, three TV debates from the 1980 presidendial campaign (including the two major debates), eight debates from the 1984 Democratic presidential primary campaign, the two Reagan-Mondale debates in 1984, the 1984 vice presidential debate, and six debates from the 1988 presidential primary campaigns. For information on fees and holdings, see Television News Index and Abstracts (published monthly), or write to Vanderbilt Television News Archive, Vanderbilt Univ. Library, Vanderbilt Univ., Nashville, TN 37240.